

October - December 2015

Examiners' Report NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (IGC1)



Examiners' Report

UNIT IGC1: MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2015



For: NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety
NEBOSH International Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management
NEBOSH International Certificate in Construction Health and Safety

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Introduction

NEBOSH (The National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health) was formed in 1979 as an independent examining board and awarding body with charitable status. We offer a comprehensive range of globally-recognised, vocationally-related qualifications designed to meet the health, safety, environmental and risk management needs of all places of work in both the private and public sectors.

Courses leading to NEBOSH qualifications attract around 50,000 candidates annually and are offered by over 600 course providers, with examinations taken in over 120 countries around the world. Our qualifications are recognised by the relevant professional membership bodies including the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management (IIRSM).

NEBOSH is an awarding body that applies best practice setting, assessment and marking and applies to Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) regulatory requirements.

This report provides guidance for candidates which it is hoped will be useful to candidates and tutors in preparation for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content and the application of assessment criteria.

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General comments

Many candidates are well prepared for this unit assessment and provide comprehensive and relevant answers in response to the demands of the question paper. This includes the ability to demonstrate understanding of knowledge by applying it to workplace situations.

There are other candidates, however, who appear to be unprepared for the unit assessment and who show both a lack of knowledge of the syllabus content and a lack of understanding of how key concepts should be applied to workplace situations.

This report has been prepared to provide feedback on standard date and on-demand IGC1 examinations sat between October and December 2015.

Feedback is presented in these key areas; examination technique, command words and learning outcomes and is designed to assist candidates and course providers to prepare for future assessments in this unit.

Candidates and course providers will also benefit from use of the 'Guide to the NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety' which is available via the NEBOSH website. In particular, the guide sets out in detail the syllabus content for IGC1 and tutor reference documents for each Element.

Additional guidance on command words is provided in 'Guidance on command words used in learning outcomes and question papers' which is also available via the NEBOSH website.

Candidates and course providers should also make reference to the IGC1 'Example question paper and Examiners' feedback on expected answers' which provides example questions and details Examiners' expectations and typical areas of underperformance.

Candidate performance

This report covers all examinations, both standard and on-demand examination sittings during October to December 2015.

Learning outcomes

The full content of all the learning outcomes below are set out in the 'Guide to the NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety (November 2014 specification)' which is referred to as 'the Guide' below in this report.

The following six learning outcomes have been identified as being the most challenging areas of the syllabus for candidates in this period:

4.1 Outline the principles, purpose and role of active and reactive monitoring

In brief, the content of learning outcome 4.1 includes knowledge and understanding of active monitoring procedures, including monitoring of performance standards and inspection of plant and premises; role of safety inspections, sampling and tours; factors that govern the frequency and type of inspection, competence of inspectors, factors related to how inspections are carried out, such as use of checklists; effective monitoring report writing; and reactive monitoring measures such as ill-health and near misses.

Performance on learning outcome 4.1 was the most challenging during this period. A number of candidates had very limited knowledge and understanding of workplace inspections and how, when and by whom they may be carried out. Even marks available for points such as inspections are a physical check on a workplace; and inspections may be carried out by safety representatives were missed by many candidates.

More candidates were able to provide answers related to the use of checklists and those related to the need for an inspector to be competent, but overall, answers lacked the breadth of correct content to achieve a reasonable or good mark.

Some candidates appeared to have limited knowledge and understanding of 'monitoring' and although they could provide some brief points, they could not comply with the requirement of the command word and provide an answer of sufficient depth, ie these candidates listed their points rather than giving the required outline. Although not complying with a command word is often a weakness in examination technique, it can also reflect rather superficial knowledge of the question topic and that seems to be the case here.

Where questions were asked about reactive monitoring, some candidates appeared to see this as only related to accidents and not the breadth of reactive measures, for example, near misses, ill-health incidents and complaints.

The performance of some candidates was such that it may be that they had studied the subjects of learning outcome 4.1 only briefly or perhaps not at all.

It may be that candidates over relied on work experiences and assumed that knowledge of monitoring gained through their work would be sufficient. The performance of many candidates in this area shows that this is not sufficient. Within organisations, terms like 'audit' are not always used precisely (ie the words 'audit' and 'inspection' can be used as if they are the same) and it is important that candidates study and understand the correct meanings of these common terms.

Some candidates missed out on gaining marks because they provided content in their answers that was not relevant to the question set. For example, where a question required an answer related to the frequency of inspections, answers were given that outlined the features an inspector would look for in a workplace, how an inspection might be carried out, or who might carry out an inspection. Also candidates confused key features of an inspection with reasons why an inspection is carried out. These errors may relate to poor examination technique, such as not reading the question carefully or even 'question spotting' but may also relate to limited understanding of the question topic.

It is important that candidates study all of the content of the learning outcomes in IGC1. Candidates, and their course tutors, need to consider what is included in the Guide related to learning outcome 4.1.

Candidates will benefit from being able to practice answering questions in examination-like settings, in particular because this practice will enable any gaps in their knowledge and understanding or confusion of concepts to be identified, feedback to be provided to them and the weaknesses to be remedied.

1.3 Explain the role of national governments and international bodies in formulating a framework for the regulation of health and safety

Learning outcome 1.3 requires candidates to have knowledge and understanding of the role of national governments and international bodies, including employers' responsibilities; workers' responsibilities and workers' rights; the role of enforcement agencies and the consequences of non-compliance; international standards and conventions (ILO and ISO); and sources of information on national standards.

During this period candidates appeared to have limited understanding of the potential consequences of non-compliance with health and safety regulations and of the role of national governments related to the regulation of health and safety at work.

Where questions required candidates to provide examples of how employers' or workers' responsibilities could be met, many candidates were unable to provide appropriate examples. Answers related to the role of enforcement agencies were often limited in the number of points included in candidates' responses. The role of 'prosecution' was often outlined, but other roles, such as the provision of advice, were often missed.

Where a question required the candidate to outline reasons why an enforcement agency might carry out an inspection, some candidates gave answers that covered what an enforcement officer might look for, rather than the reasons why an inspection might be carried out.

A number of candidates were unable to outline the role of national governments to help ensure good health and safety standards (eg setting legal requirements, establishing an enforcement agency, promoting good standards and setting a good example when contracting for services). Candidates also struggled to outline why national governments want to ensure good standards of health and safety (eg reduction of national costs of work related ill-health/state sick pay and preserving the nation's reputation).

It is unlikely that many candidates will have learned about the role of national governments through their own work experiences and it is an area of the IGC1 syllabus that candidates need to study. The performance of some candidates, ie those who did not attempt questions related to national governments or who earned very low marks, indicates that some had not studied this topic.

Some of the aspects may relate to poor examination technique but are also likely to be the result of limited knowledge and understanding of the content of the syllabus. It is important that candidates study all of the content of all learning outcomes.

It is likely to benefit candidates if they have the opportunity to practice questions on the topics within this learning outcome and receive feedback on their performance so as to then correct any errors, or add to their studies.

2.3 Describe the key features and appropriate content of an effective health and safety policy

Candidates need to have knowledge and understanding of the features and aspects of health and safety policy, these include setting and stating the aims; what factors might influence the setting and stating of aims such as benchmarking, consultation with stakeholders and business requirements; roles and responsibilities and organising for effective health and safety; the arrangements to implement the policy effectively; review and changes to health and safety policy; and standards and guidance.

Candidates showed a limited understanding of the SMART principles when target setting. Where a question required an answer stating 'why' health and safety targets are set, some candidates offered examples of possible targets and not the reasons why.

Many candidates did not understand the term 'benchmarking' and were therefore unable to provide a reasonable answer to questions where benchmarking was included. Given the observable limitations of answers related to questions where benchmarking featured it may benefit candidates if there is particular attention to this concept and its contribution to health and safety.

There was also limited understanding of the reasons why responsibilities of managers and workers need to be set out clearly in a health and safety policy. Although many candidates appeared to understand that a health and safety policy will include 'arrangements', few candidates were able to provide a reasonable or good answer as to what may be within the arrangements part of a policy and the contribution the arrangements make to a policy being effective.

Examiners observed that questions requiring the depth of answer indicated by a command word such as 'outline' were not always answered well. As stated elsewhere in this report, failure to follow the requirement of a command word is a common weakness in examination technique but it can also indicate that a candidate's knowledge and understanding of a question topic is limited and although they may be able to list points, the candidate cannot provide the depth of answer required by the question.

Candidates need to study all of the content of learning outcome 2.3. As mentioned previously, practice questions and receiving feedback is likely to be helpful to candidates.

3.4 Explain how health and safety behaviour at work can be improved

This learning outcome covers ways of improving health and safety behaviour at work such as securing commitment of management; how leadership example and, where appropriate, discipline can promote good standards; competent personnel; identifying and then keeping up to date with legal requirements; effective communication methods and the use and effectiveness of different health and safety media; co-operation, consultation and the role and benefits of worker participation and safety committees; the effect of training; and opportunities and the need for training.

This learning outcome begins with the word 'explain' and candidates need to have sufficient knowledge and understanding to answer questions with command words including 'outline' and 'explain'. This means candidates will have to provide answers in sufficient depth to meet the requirements of those command word and need to be confident to do this.

Responses to questions about consultation with the workforce were often answered with too few valid points ie insufficient breadth. This could be an indication of poor examination technique, but is also seen where the candidates' knowledge and understanding of a topic is limited and the reason for providing only one or two points in an answer is that the candidate only knew one or two points.

Where an answer required candidates to say what should be considered when developing health and safety training (for example, levels of risk, existing competencies, etc) some candidates gave answers that outlined what might be covered in a training course, or examples of health and safety training that might be provided and these candidates missed most or all of the marks available.

A number of candidates could not outline reasons why it is important to consult with its workers on health and safety matters, for example to contribute to a positive safety culture and to obtain ownership by the workforce.

There was some indication that candidates were providing answers to questions they expected or hoped to see in the paper, rather than the one set in their examination. There was a question related to 'verbal communication' where many answers provided discussed other means of communication and missed most of the marks available. Similarly, a question requiring the benefits of induction to be outlined was sometimes answered with the possible content of an induction session. These answers may have been the result of poor examination technique but are also likely to reflect a lack of knowledge and understanding that would provide a candidate with the confidence to answer the questions actually set. It does appear that some candidates are providing an answer to questions on this learning outcome that they expected to see or had hoped for.

Candidates need good knowledge and understanding of learning outcome 3.4 and to have the confidence to answer the question set for them in the paper. Candidates and course tutors need to consider all of the content of learning outcome 3.4. Candidates study of its content needs to be thorough and result in confidence to answer questions with 'outline' or 'explain' as the command word.

3.5 Explain the principles and practice of risk assessment

This learning outcome includes the topic of principles and practice of risk assessment, from its foundations, such as the meanings of terms (eg hazard and risk), objectives of risk assessment, how risk assessments are carried out, how risk assessments are made to be an effective part of managing health and safety and special case applications.

It may be that some candidates who, through work experiences, have some knowledge of how risk assessments are done in their own organisation and then over-rely on that work experience. Candidates need to consider all of the content of this learning outcome and thoroughly understand both the principles of risk assessment and the practice of risk assessments.

During this period, candidates showed limited knowledge and understanding of special case applications. Questions asked covered the following special case applications - lone worker, pregnant working and disabled workers and generally, all questions about these special case applications were not answered well by candidates. There was also limited understanding of how hazards may be identified.

A question that required candidates to outline the attributes required of risk assessors (eg attention to detail, knowledge of health and safety legal requirements) was answered by a number of candidates by listing the job titles of people who might carry out risk assessments.

There are indications that understanding of principles and practice of risk assessments by candidates is rather superficial and not in the depth that will enable them to answer questions on the content of 3.4 with confidence.

As with other learning outcomes already covered in this report, candidates are advised to practice questions and to reflect upon feedback on their performance. This should help correct errors in understanding and/or enable gaps in knowledge to be remedied.

5.2 Explain the purpose of, and procedures for, regular reviews of health and safety performance

Candidates should have knowledge and understanding of the purpose of and procedures for regular reviews of health and safety performance, including the purpose of reviewing performance; who should take part in a review; reviews being carried out at planned intervals; reviews informing opportunities for change and improvement; what a review may consider (this details twelve points, eg audits and results of participation and consultation); reporting on performance; feeding into action plans and contribution of review to continuous improvement; and the role of Boards and senior managers.

Learning outcome 5.2 begins with 'explain' and this means that candidates may be asked questions with command words including 'outline' or 'explain' and require answers of more depth than 'identify'.

Candidates' knowledge and understanding of this learning outcome needs to give them the confidence to answer questions to an appropriate depth.

A number of candidates did not understand what a review of health and safety performance is, and provided answers related to the setting of, or amending of, health and safety policy. Similarly, a number of candidates confused monitoring with review of performance and, for example, provided an answer related to audit practice rather than reviewing.

Where candidates were able to provide some valid points in their answers, often they could not provide answers in sufficient depth, that is, they could not provide a reasonable outline or to explain. This may be the result of poor examination technique but may also indicate limited knowledge and understanding of this learning outcome.

Examiners reported that it appears that a number of candidates were ill-prepared to answer questions related to the review of health and safety performance and had difficulty in providing reasonable answers.

It is important that candidates study all of the learning outcomes within the IGC1 syllabus (as set out in the Guide) and do so thoroughly so as to give them confidence to answer the questions that may be set. As mentioned above, practice questions and feedback will help.

Examination technique

The following issues are consistently identified as the main areas in need of improvement for candidates undertaking Certificate level qualifications:

Candidates misread/misinterpreted the question

Candidates misreading or misinterpreting the question is by far the most common cause of candidates not gaining the maximum marks available.

NEBOSH questions are systematically and carefully prepared and are subject to a number of checks and balances prior to being authorised for use in question papers. These checks include ensuring that questions set for the Certificate level qualifications relate directly to the learning outcomes contained within the associated syllabus guides. The learning outcomes require candidates to be sufficiently prepared to provide the relevant depth of answer across a broad range of topic areas. For example, a candidate could be asked about the causes of stress, or could be asked about the effects of stress. A question could require a response relating to the principles of fire initiation, or a question could require a response relating to the spread of fire. Therefore, a candidate should focus not only on the general topic area (eg stress, fire) but also the specific aspect of that topic to which the question relates.

Candidates must also pay attention to the command word. For example, a question could ask candidates to '**identify** the hazards associated with demolition work', or a question from the same element could ask candidates to '**outline** the control measures required during demolition work'. Candidates appear to focus solely on the object of the question (demolition) and do not pay sufficient attention to the subject (hazards or control measures in the examples given) or the command word ('identify' or 'outline' in the examples given). There is often some confusion between hazard and risk. If a question requires an outline of hazards for a given situation, candidates must be careful not to provide risks, or even in some circumstances precautions, as they will not be able to attract marks.

Examiners suggest that while many candidates do begin their answer satisfactorily and perhaps gain one or two marks, they then lose sight of the question and include irrelevant information. Although further points included in an answer can relate to the general topic area, these points are not focused on the specific learning outcome and marks cannot be awarded. However, some candidates appear to misread or misinterpret several questions. This situation is more likely due to candidates preparing for the examination with a number of stock answers obtained through rote-learning, that again can provide answers that are loosely associated with the topic matter but do not provide answers specific to the question. Such an approach is clearly evident to an Examiner and demonstrates little understanding of the topic matter and marks are not awarded.

Candidates are advised to allow sufficient time to read and re-read the question in order to determine the key requirements prior to committing their answer to paper. Preparing a time plan before the examination will indicate how many minutes are available for each question and then part of this time allocation can be given to reading the question. Underlining or highlighting key words can assist in keeping focused on the salient points and simple mind maps or answer plans can also be useful. Maps and plans should be kept simple so as not to use up too much examination time.

Candidates did not respond effectively to the command word

A key indicator in an examination question will be the command word, which is always given in **bold** typeface. The command word will indicate the depth of answer that is expected by the candidate that relates to the amount of detail that should be included in each point of the answer.

The learning outcomes in each element of all syllabus guides include the relevant command word that dictates the level of detail that should be covered in a course of study and the depth of answer that a candidate would be expected to provide in an answer to an examination question.

Examiners report that candidates continue to incorrectly observe the command words and therefore compromise their ability to gain the marks available. The majority of cases where command words are not observed relate to insufficient detail being given by a candidate in their examination answer. A significant number of candidates, irrespective of the command word given in the question, provide all answers in the form of a brief list of one or two words. This would normally not be sufficient to gain marks where the command word given was 'outline', 'explain' or 'describe', all of which require answers of more than one or two words.

Some candidates do provide too much information, which would not be required where a command word limits the expected answer to 'give' or 'identify'. Candidates would not be penalised for providing excessive detail but this would not be an efficient use of the time allocated.

Course providers should ensure that learning materials complement the command words in the syllabus guide and the NEBOSH guidance on command words and that sufficient time is given to advising candidates on suitable examination technique during a course of study.

Candidates unnecessarily wrote the question down

Developing a time plan is a key element in preparing for an examination. Advice included on Certificate question papers suggests that 30 minutes should be allocated for the answer to the long 20-mark question, and 90 minutes should be allocated to the answers for the remaining ten, 8-mark short questions. Therefore there are around 9 minutes available to answer an 8-mark question. This time will be required for reading the question properly at least twice, developing an answer plan, and then committing the answer to paper while regularly referring back to the question in order to maintain focus. Therefore any inefficient use of this time should be avoided.

The efficient use of this time is essential in order to ensure that all questions can be answered within the 2 hours available. Many candidates feel it necessary to write out the question, in full, prior to providing their answer and although this practice will not lose marks it will lose valuable time. A significant number of candidates do not answer all of the questions in the time permitted and do not complete the question paper, some of whom obviously ran out of time.

Candidates provided rote-learned responses that did not fit the question

It is clear that there are a significant number of candidates who seem to recite answers in the examination that have been rote-learned in advance and do not answer the question.

While knowledge of material forms a part of the study for a Certificate-level qualification, a key aspect being assessed is a candidate's **understanding** of the topic and reciting a pre-prepared and memorised answer will not show a candidate's understanding. In fact, if a candidate gives a memorised answer to a question that may look similar, but actually is asking for a different aspect of a topic in the syllabus, it shows a lack of understanding of the topic and will inevitably result in low marks being awarded for that answer.

Candidates repeated the same points but in different ways / Candidates provided the same answer to different questions

There are instances where candidates repeat very similar points in their answers, sometimes a number of times. This is easily done in the stressful environment of the examination. However, once a point has been successfully made and a mark awarded for it, that mark cannot be awarded again for similar points made later in the answer.

Candidates are advised to practise examination technique in their preparations to avoid this kind of pitfall. Writing an answer plan where points can be ticked off when made, or structuring an answer so that each point made is clearly shown, for example by underlining key points, can be of great use. This technique aids candidates and makes it much clearer in the stress of the examination for candidates to see which points have been made and reduce the chances of the same point being made several times.

Candidates did not answer all of the questions

It has been noted that a number of candidates do not attempt all of the questions on the examination and of course where a candidate does not provide an answer to a question, no marks can be awarded. This seriously affects the potential marks available and the possibility of achieving a pass. Course providers must emphasise the importance of attempting all questions in order to maximise the opportunity to attract marks. Some candidates do not answer up to four questions which is a potential thirty-two marks that the candidates could not gain. Obviously, this will affect pass rates.

There can be several reasons for this issue: running out of the allocated time for the examination, not knowing the answer to the question, or forgetting to answer a question.

Questions can be answered in any order and answers can be written in any order in the answer book provided. Candidates are advised to clearly keep track of questions they have attempted, such as marking them on the question paper that would minimise the risk of inadvertently missing a question to answer.

If the topic of the question is unfamiliar or the answer is not known, then it will be challenging to provide an answer. This can result from rote-learning and preparing for an examination with a number of stock answers, or simply not being adequately prepared for the examination across the breadth of the syllabus. There is always the risk of a candidate 'going blank' in an examination situation, in which case candidates should be prepared with some techniques to help. Rather than trying to remember what was taught or what has been read, ask yourself 'what would I do, in this situation?'. Reference to personal application or experience is sometimes enough to stimulate an answer that otherwise may have been missed. Alternatively, candidates can go back to first principles and break a question down into elements such as 'people', 'equipment', 'materials' and the 'working environment'. Approaching a question in small sections can minimise the risk of being overwhelmed by it as a whole.

Running out of time can be avoided by having an examination time plan and working to it. The question paper advises that you should spend 30 minutes on the long answer (question 1) and 90 minutes on the remaining ten short answer questions. This will provide around 9 minutes per short answer, follow the clock and when the time per question has expired, move on. Answering a question partly is better than not answering at all.

Candidates did not allocate enough time to the question / Time management

In a number of cases question 1 is left until last or later in the question paper and does not appear to be answered completely. Other candidates appear to rush the last one or two questions by providing very brief or bullet point answers, even when these questions require an outline. This indicates a lack of time management. It is advised that course providers and candidates spend time developing the skill of writing answers to questions bearing in mind the number of marks and time available. A 20-mark question requires significantly more detail than an 8-mark question.

Candidates might benefit from writing abbreviations to save time and to recognise that there is no need to write out the question at the beginning of their answer. Standard abbreviations such as HSE, RIDDOR, COSHH, PPE and DSE are acceptable.

Candidates' handwriting was illegible

Sometimes Examiners have difficulty in reading the handwriting of some candidates. Although allowances are made for candidates under the pressure of an examination, course providers must remind candidates that their writing needs to be legible or valuable marks may not be picked up during marking.

There is a minimum literacy requirement for candidates on NEBOSH qualifications. As stated in the syllabus guides the standard of English required by candidates studying for Certificate level must be such that they can both understand and articulate the concepts contained in the syllabus.

NEBOSH recommends to accredited course providers that candidates undertaking this qualification should reach a minimum standard of English equivalent to an International English Language Testing System score of 6.0 or higher in IELTS tests in order to be accepted onto a Certificate level programme.

For further information please see the latest version of the IELTS Handbook or consult the IELTS website: http://www.ielts.org/institutions/test_format_and_results.aspx

Candidates wishing to assess their own language expertise may consult the IELTS website for information on taking the test: <http://www.ielts.org/institutions/faqs.aspx>

Course providers are reminded that they must ensure that these standards are satisfied or additional tuition provided to ensure accessible and inclusive lifelong learning.

Command words

Please note that the examples used here are for the purpose of explanation only.

Outline

The command word 'outline' is by far the most challenging for candidates. Referring to the NEBOSH guidance on command words available on the NEBOSH website, 'outline' means *"To indicate the principal features or different parts of"*.

Many candidates do not give sufficient detail in order to warrant an 'outline' answer. The NEBOSH guidance on command word states that *"an exhaustive description is not required. What is sought is a brief summary of the major aspects of whatever is stated in the question"*.

If the use of the command word in everyday language or conversation is considered it may help the candidate understand what is required. If asked to '**outline** the risks to an operator when manually closing a valve' an answer such as 'cuts, bruises, burns and strains' would be insufficient as this represents a listed answer. However, 'cuts from contact with sharp edges of the hand wheel, bruises from impact with adjacent plant items, burns from contact with adjacent uninsulated pipe work and strains from using excessive force' would be sufficient.

Explain

The command word 'explain' requires the candidate to provide an understanding of the subject of the question and will usually be used in conjunction with 'why' or 'how'. Such as '**explain** how an interlocked guard operates' or '**explain** why a forklift truck may overturn'.

Some candidates approach an 'explain' question the same as an 'outline' and provide a number of individual points rather than providing an explanation as to how something operates or why something occurs. While some candidates do answer such questions sufficiently and satisfactorily, other candidates have difficulty in explaining in a logical sequence and many repeat the same point.

Identify

'Identify' questions require the name or title of an item, such as, '**identify** the effects of electricity on the human body', or '**identify** the features of a vehicle route'. In most cases one or two words will be sufficient and further detail will not be required to gain the marks.

For example, if asked to '**identify** types of equipment found in an office' appropriate answers could be personal computer, printer, telephone, photocopier, etc. There would be no need to embellish those points with a description of the equipment or its function.

However, in contrast to 'outline' answers being too brief, many candidates feel obliged to expand 'identify' answers into too much detail, with the possible perception that more words equals more marks. This is not the case and course providers should use the NEBOSH guidance on command words within their examination preparation sessions in order to prepare candidates for the command words that may arise.

Describe

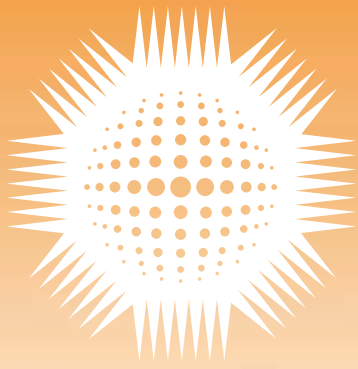
The command word 'describe' clearly requires a description of something. The NEBOSH guidance on command words says that 'describe' requires a detailed written account of the distinctive features of a topic such that another person would be able to visualise what was being described.

If a person was asked to describe the clock in the examination room, they would have little difficulty in doing so and would most probably refer to its shape, its size, the colour of the clock and the style of numerals. Answers to such a question would almost certainly not result in general unconnected information about clocks, the history of clocks, or an explanation of why the clock is present in the room. Candidates should consider the general use of the command word when providing examination answers.

Give

'Give' questions require a statement that is relevant to the subject asked for in the question but additional explanation is not required. Often, 'give' questions ask for the meaning of a particular term. While detailed explanation of the application of the term would not be required, a correct knowledge of the term itself is needed in order for the Examiner to award marks.

For additional guidance, please see NEBOSH's '*Guidance on command words used in learning outcomes and question papers*' document, which is available on our website: www.nebosh.org.uk/students/default.asp?cref=1345&ct=2.



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